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FACT SHEET: ASTHMA IN NEW JERSEY TEENS (AGES 13-17)

About asthma

- Asthma is a serious and chronic disease that is marked by inflammation and bronchoconstriction in the airways.
- Symptoms of asthma include shortness of breath, coughing, wheezing and chest tightness.
- Asthma symptoms can be triggered by:
 - **smoke (tobacco and other types), allergies, illness, acid reflux, exercise, some medications, unvented gas appliances, strong odors, air pollution or weather conditions, some foods, and strong emotions,**
 - **allergens from dust or dust mites, cockroaches, rodents, pets, mold, pollen, or grass.**
- Asthma cannot be cured, but it can be controlled.
- Uncontrolled asthma can lead to emergency department visits, hospitalization and even death.

Asthma prevalence among New Jersey teens

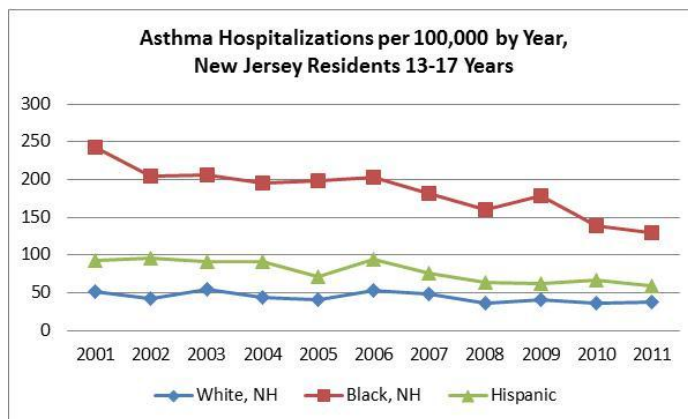
- About 8.8% of New Jersey teens have asthma.¹
- More teen boys (10.8%) in New Jersey have asthma than teen girls (6.9%).

Treatment of asthma in New Jersey teens

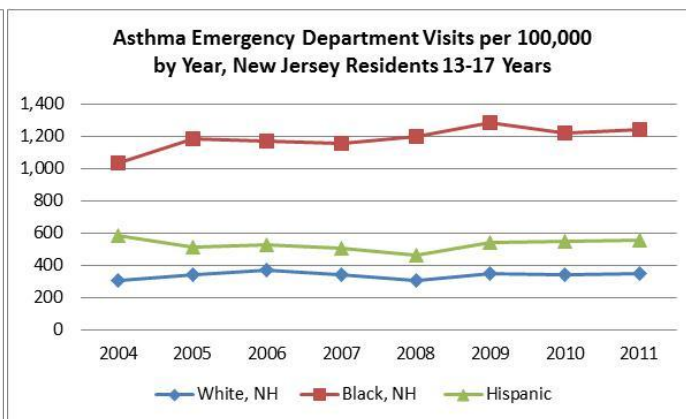
- Only about 60% of New Jersey teens with current asthma have been given an asthma treatment plan or asthma action plan (a written plan to help control asthma) by a health professional.
- About 53% of New Jersey teens with current asthma use prescription medication for their asthma. Of these, about 29% use long-term control medications designed to be taken daily to maintain control of asthma symptoms and about 44% use quick relief medications, used to provide fast relief for acute asthma symptoms. About 20% use both types of medications.

Effects of asthma on New Jersey teens

- There are racial and ethnic disparities in asthma hospitalization and ED visit rates among New Jersey teens, as shown in the following figures. Black, non-Hispanic teens continue to have the highest rates when compared to white, non-Hispanic and Hispanic teens.



Data Source: 2001-2011 New Jersey Hospital Discharge Files
Population Source: 2011 Bridged Race Population Estimates



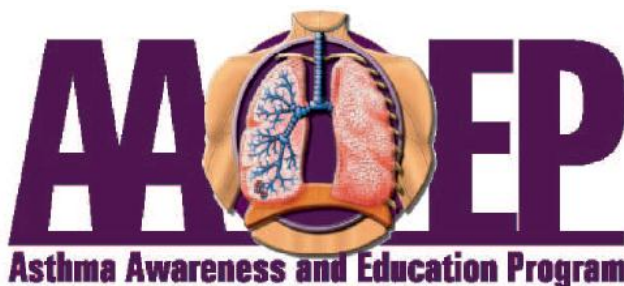
Data Source: 2004-2011 New Jersey ED Discharge Files
Population Source: 2011 Bridged Race Population Estimates

- About 25% of New Jersey teens with current asthma had an urgent doctor visit in the past year because of asthma symptoms.
- About 51% of New Jersey teens with current asthma experience some activity limitation due to their asthma symptoms.
- Only about 47% of New Jersey teens with current asthma have well-controlled asthma. Well-controlled means symptoms on eight or fewer of the previous 30 days, difficulty sleeping on two or fewer of the previous 30 days, and no limitation of usual activities due to asthma in the past year.
- About 27% of New Jersey teens with current asthma missed 1-3 days of school due to their asthma in the past year, while nearly 24% missed 4 or more days.

For more information:

New Jersey Asthma Awareness and Education Program: www.nj.gov/health/asthma

Pediatric Adult Asthma Coalition of New Jersey (PACNJ): www.pacnj.org



Notes:

1. This is the percentage of teens where the adult respondent reports that the teen currently has asthma. An additional 5.1% of teens have some history of asthma. Information about treatments and symptoms is only collected for the children who currently have asthma.

References:

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System Survey Data, 2011. <http://www.cdc.gov/brfss/> (source for asthma prevalence discussion; source of information on child is the adult answering the survey)
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Asthma Call-back Survey Data, 2008-2010. <http://www.cdc.gov/asthma/ACBS.htm> (source for discussions on asthma treatment, survey data on ER and urgent doctor visits, activity limitations and asthma control; source of information on child is the adult answering the survey)
- New Jersey Hospital Patient Discharge Data: <http://www.state.nj.us/health/healthcarequality/ub/ub92intro.shtml> (source for hospitalizations and emergency department visits)

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